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Summary record of the 20th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 30 October 2001, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Effah-Apenteng ..... (Ghana)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle

Contents

Agenda item 122: Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 (*continued*)

Agenda item 133: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.4/55/L.23
Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects (continued)

Agenda item 126: Human resources management

Consultants

Delegation of authority

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 122: Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 (*continued*)

Agenda item 133: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.4/55/L.23: Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects (continued) (A/C.5/55/46 and Add.1 and A/56/478)

1. **Mr. Lee** Ho-jin (Republic of Korea) said that the maintenance of international peace and security was one of the primary purposes of the United Nations. Experience had shown that peacekeeping was an indispensable instrument of the Organization. The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations had presented the results of its comprehensive review and had enumerated the resource requirements that they would entail. His delegation welcomed the Special Committee's proposals and urged that action should be taken on them quickly. He wished to reaffirm the Republic of Korea's commitment to continue to participate in peacekeeping operations.

2. Turning to the budgetary implications, he associated his delegation with the request made by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) that the support account should be presented in conformity with General Assembly resolution 55/231 on results-based budgeting. The increase in resources for peacekeeping operations must not compromise their efficiency. The current exercise was part of an ongoing reform process and should not be seen as an opportunity to request resources that were not clearly related to peacekeeping needs. The Advisory Committee was to be commended for the budgetary discipline it had shown.

3. Better coordination and an improved division of labour were needed between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and other departments and also between Headquarters and field operations, and greater accountability was required. His delegation was deeply concerned about the safety and security of United Nations and associated personnel involved in peacekeeping operations and believed that the matter should be considered in the context of the Secretary-General's related report. The resident audit service for peacekeeping operations should be strengthened. Such services had been effective in providing adequate internal audit coverage and in deterring mismanagement, waste, abuse and fraud in peacekeeping missions. More than 80 per cent of the over 1,500 recommendations resulting from the activities of 15 resident auditors between 1994 and 1999 had been implemented. Those recommendations had related to the recovery of fraud-related and other overpayments of $9.5 million and savings or income-enhancement measures amounting to an additional $9.3 million. Finally, he shared the view that the restructuring of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should be evaluated after a certain period of time.

Agenda item 126: Human resources management

Consultants (A/55/59 and Add.1, A/55/321, A/55/451; A/56/7 and A/56/16)

Delegation of authority (A/55/857 and Add.1; A/56/7)

4. **Mr. Mirmohammad** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) and other reports on the delegation of authority had been considered by the Fifth Committee at the previous session, and that the General Assembly had endorsed the Unit's recommendations in decision 55/481 of 1 June 2001. The General Assembly had also expressed its desire to discuss the issue in the light of the opinion of the Advisory Committee. The Fifth Committee could therefore avoid a substantive debate on the question by suggesting that the Secretary-General, when implementing the Unit's recommendations, should take into consideration the comments of the Advisory Committee. Since the JIU report on consultants had been discussed in the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC), the Fifth Committee could also avoid a substantive debate on that subject simply by endorsing the recommendation of CPC and calling on the Secretary-General to take into account the corresponding observations of the Advisory Committee.

5. **Mr. Ronse** (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the associated countries Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia

Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey and, in addition, Norway, said that it was premature to embark on a discussion on human resources management without all the necessary documents.

6. Concerning the delegation of authority and the JIU report thereon, the European Union was concerned about the comments and recommendations formulated in respect of the Office of Human Resources Management by ACABQ in its report (A/56/7). The Secretary-General had been asked to report to the fifty-seventh session on measures to improve "responsibility in the reform of human resources management as well as the monitoring and control mechanisms and procedures" (A/55/258). A short-term solution must be found to the problem of the delegation of authority. Concrete results must therefore be achieved at the fifty-seventh session.

7. His delegation believed that the use of retirees should be discussed in the context of the examination of the overall report on staff policy which the Secretary-General was due to present to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session. In addition, the Committee would require the additional information which the Secretariat had promised for 2002 in order to discuss the sensitive but essential question of salary ceilings.

8. Concerning the principle of geographical balance in the hiring of consultants, the choice of consultants must be consistent with the existing rules and regulations of the United Nations system. The criterion must therefore be the highest quality of service at the lowest cost, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 55/232 and 55/247.

9. The European Union endorsed the Advisory Committee's recommendations regarding the establishment of an inventory of skills available in the Secretariat and the need for budget documents to give more precise information on requirements for consultants and justification for the use of outside expertise. Unfortunately, there was no satisfactory system for the comprehensive management of information on consultants. In view of the workload of the current session, the European Union was prepared to join in a consensus to postpone consideration of the issue.

10. The European Union had also duly noted the changes that the Secretary-General intended to make to the Staff Rules.

The meeting rose at 10.30 a.m.